

## CLAIMS

Claims 21 to 23 are canceled.

24. (amended) A railway tie that comprises two elastically supported blocks placed one under each rail, wherein each block is restricted from an excessive upward movement or complete withdrawal from said railway tie by a pair of tie block retainers attached to said railway tie next to each of said elastically supported blocks, and wherein said tie block retainer is a releasable device that comprises a horizontally protruding elastic member that engages the corresponding mating surface of said elastically supported block.

25. (amended) A tie block retainer of claim 24 for a concrete tie using a releasable device for retaining tie blocks (two each) inserted in said concrete tie, wherein the tie block retainer comprises of a cast iron insert equipped with an anchor member for anchorage in said concrete tie, and with a curved slot at the top of said anchor member to receive leaf springs that are secured by a vertical pin inserted into aligned holes on top of said anchor member.

26. (amended) A tie block retainer of claim 24 for a steel tie using a releasable device for retaining tie blocks (two each) inserted in said steel tie, wherein the block retainer comprises of a cast iron insert equipped with an anchor member having a threaded extension for attachment to said steel tie, and with a curved slot at the top of said anchor member to receive leaf springs that are secured by a vertical pin inserted into aligned holes on top of said anchor member.

27. (amended) A tie block retainer of claim 24 engaging with its said horizontally protruding elastic retaining member a trapezoidal rod of adjustable thickness that is inserted into a trapezoidal slot located on the top of said elastically supported block to provide a mating surface.

28. (amended) A tie block retainer of claim 24 wherein a space is left between the bottom surface of said horizontally protruding retaining member and the corresponding mating surface of the tie block inserted in said railway tie so that the upward movement of the running rail occurring at a certain distance from applied wheel load is facilitated without lifting said railway tie from its contact plane on ballast.

29. (amended) A tie block retainer of claim 24 bridging over a tie block sleeve, wherein the tie block sleeve comprises of an electrically insulating member attached to the top of said tie block, while the tie block is inserted in said railway tie in such a manner that said tie block sleeve provides an overhang continuous around said tie block, and wherein said tie block sleeve protrudes outward and slopes downward in such a manner that the bottom side of said overhang is protected from directly falling rain water.